

Solid Waste Advisory Committee - Town of Granby - Motion

Motion: Brush/Grass/Leaf Collection Site be Located at the Town Highway Department Property
SWAC Committee Members : Joe Furnia, Jay Joyce, John McGreevy, Mary McDowell

For the past three months, the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) has researched, debated, classified, analyzed, and prioritized the needs of the Town of Granby as it relates to the collection and disposal of waste.

The original premise: Granby will need a Transfer Station in the future; perhaps as soon as the initial curbside collection contract with Allied expires May 31, 2017. This premise is based upon the assumption that fees for curbside pickup are artificially low, and that it will be more cost effective in the future to operate our own Transfer Station. When the benefit of operating our own Transfer Station for the collection and disposal of solid waste exceeds the cost of curbside pickup is yet to be determined. It is possible that a Transfer Station may not be needed in the current decade, given the price competition in the marketplace.

The committee remains focused on the long term, and is committed to providing a comprehensive plan for a future Transfer Station. However, as our research and understanding of the elements and nuances of waste collection and disposal has grown, our thinking has evolved. We have identified community needs that are not adequately addressed in the current contract with Allied.

SWAC has identified near term and long term needs, and adopted an incremental approach to addressing those needs. The most pressing need is to provide a collection site for disposal of Brush/Grass/Leaves. With the Fall upon us, residents of the town need a place to dispose of their leaves and brush.

After looking at our options, and discussing those options with departmental and regulatory personnel, we have come to a unanimous decision. **SWAC proposes that the Granby DPW location be used for Brush/Grass/Leaf collection site through December 31, 2014, conditional upon approval by Selectboard.**

The Granby Highway Department represents the most logical location in the near term; as well as, the most economical and efficient. It is proposed that the strip of land to the right of the Highway Department building where stumps and wood chips are currently located be used to collect grass and leaves, and chip brush. The site was reviewed by Dan Hall of the Commonwealth DEP on September 4, 2014. Highway Department head Dave Derosiers has given his consent, although he is concerned about manpower issues.

According to Dan Hall, we are exempted from the need to obtain a General Permit (which subjects us to inspection of the site) for leaf and yard waste if it is transferred off-site within 7 days. Wood chips are exempted from this transfer requirement. If we compost on-site, we need to file for a permit with Dan Hall.

See link... <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/service/approvals/general-permit-recycling-composting-digestion.html>

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This is a trial run, so we have set an expiration date of December 31, 2014. At the end of the year the committee, in conjunction with the highway department; will review the process and identify best practices, so that by Spring 2015, we will be in a position to implement an efficient and cost effective Brush/Grass/Leaf collection operation that meets the needs of town residents for the long term. Given the fact that the Highway Department will be responsible for the collection site, the committee recommends we leave the operational aspects up to Dave Derosiers.

The committee has identified the following concerns that need to be addressed as we move forward:

1. Do we or don't we monitor drop-off of leaves/grass? Do we expect residents to mix refuse in with their grass/leaves? Will some residents try to dump their garbage at the collection site? Manpower is an issue. Committee recommends that an additional employee be hired to address Highway Department manpower needs.
2. Since we will not compost grass/leaves at the site, where do we dispose of the leaves/grass? Red Fire Farm was contacted. Owner Ryan Violand stated that there is currently no interest. He is currently not accepting leaves grass from contractors. He is trying to purchase the land currently used by the farm for composting, and is hoping he can accomplish this through the Land Preservation Trust. He is also looking to partner with a composting business, so he has capital investment requirements. How can the town assist him in exchange for taking our grass/leaves? Do we pay Red Fire Farm? How much? Note: other local area farms, including Dickinson Farm and Sapowsky Farm; will be contacted.
3. Which day(s) of the week and hours will the collection site be open? Should there be a fee? Should we implement a sticker requirement to ensure only town residents have access? Should the collection site be restricted to residential brush/grass/leaves only? If we accept commercial, what should the fee structure be?
4. How do we communicate the opening and operation hours of the collection site: Code Red Alert? Website page? Notification by mail?

The committee believes that we need the collection site operational by October 1, 2014.